

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 451
By Henry

A RESOLUTION to welcome His Eminence, Archbishop
Demetrios of America, Primate of the Greek
Orthodox Church in America, to Nashville.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly are pleased to specially recognize those dynamic leaders of the Church who combine a profound personal faith, an intense and thorough knowledge of and scholarship in theology, and great administrative skills with a depth of Christian love for humanity; and

WHEREAS, a notable example of such a servant of God, His Eminence, Archbishop Demetrios of America, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church in America and Exarch of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, will be making his first visit to Nashville during the week of June 19, 2003, to attend the Clergy-Laity Conference of the Metropolis of Detroit; and

WHEREAS, born February 1, 1928, to Christos and Georgia Trakatellis, in Thessaloniki, Greece, Demetrios Trakatellis attended school there, graduating as Valedictorian from the Experimental High School of Aristotelian University of Thessaloniki in June 1946; and

WHEREAS, in September of 1946, he entered the School of Theology of the National and Capodistrian University of Athens, graduating with a Licentiate in Theology degree graded "excellent" in 1950; following two and a half years of military service in the army, he joined the monastic missionary brotherhood of theologians, "Zoe," and became the leading theological advisor to various university student organizations, including the Student Christian Union of Greece; and

WHEREAS, in 1960, at age 32, Demetrios Trakatellis was ordained into the office of the Diaconate, and four years later he was ordained into the Priesthood. In the fall of 1964, he undertook extensive and specialized research in the field of New Testament and Patristics in Pittsburgh; during this period, he was also serving the Church in various parishes in the Pittsburgh area, including the Dormition of Theotokos Parish, now known as St. Mary's Church in Oakmont, Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, in 1965, he began studies for a Ph.D. degree at Harvard University, receiving continuous scholarships from the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, and was awarded his Doctorate of Philosophy in November 1971; his dissertation, *The Pre-Existence of Christ in Justin Martyr: An Exegetical Study with Reference to the Humiliation and Exaltation Christology*, received the grade of "distinction" and was recommended for publication in the prestigious Harvard Dissertations in Religion series; and

WHEREAS, on June 20, 1967, during his studies, he was elected Titular Bishop of Vresthena by the Sacred Synod of the Church of Greece, and he was ordained at the Athens Cathedral by the late Archbishop Jerome of Athens and All Greece; the following year, the Holy Synod elected Bishop Demetrios as the Metropolitan of Attica and Megaris, although he declined the appointment for reasons related to the canonical order of the Church and the political situation in Greece at that time; and

WHEREAS, in 1977, Bishop Demetrios received a Doctorate in Theology from the Faculty of the School of Theology of the National and Capodistrian University in Athens; his

dissertation, *The Transcendent God of Euginostos, an Exegetical Contribution to the Study of the Gnostic Texts of Nag Hammadi with a Retroversion of the Lost Original Greek Text of Euginostos the Blessed*, received the top grade of "Excellent"; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Demetrios served as a Visiting Professor of Biblical Studies and Christian Origins at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Brookline, Massachusetts, from 1980-81 and in 1983, and in 1984 was named Distinguished Professor of Biblical Studies and Christian Origins, remaining in that position until retiring in 1993; in addition to teaching, he held the Chair for the postgraduate program "Master of Theology"; and

WHEREAS, during the same period, Bishop Demetrios joined the faculty of Harvard University as Visiting Professor of New Testament from 1984-85 and 1988-89 and from 1984-93 he also served as student advisor and as a doctoral examination committee member; and

WHEREAS, on August 20, 1991, the Sacred Synod of the Church of Greece elected Bishop Demetrios as Titular Metropolitan of Vresthena, when it also elevated the Diocese of Vresthena to the rank of Metropolis; in October 1995, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate appointed Metropolitan Demetrios as a member of the Patriarchal Exarchy to the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America; and

WHEREAS, on Thursday, August 19, 1999, His All Holiness, the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, and the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate elected Metropolitan Demetrios to the position of Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America; His Eminence, Archbishop Demetrios, was enthroned at the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in Manhattan, New York, on Saturday, September 18, 1999, as Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church in America and Exarch of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans; and

WHEREAS, since his enthronement, Archbishop Demetrios has worked diligently with the Hierarchs, clergy, and laity of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese to strengthen unity and

peace, advance administrative and ecclesiastical stability, and to resolve financial issues; the Archbishop and the Eparchial Synod have advocated various administrative changes resulting in departmental reorganization and enhancement, the establishment of new ministries, and in the renewal of commitment to planning and development by the Archdiocesan council; and

WHEREAS, as Archbishop of America, Exarch of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and head of the Eparchial Synod of the Archdiocese, His Eminence has been highly visible among the faithful, joining with Metropolitans and Bishops in leading services, consecrating churches, ordaining clergy, and extending the scope of the work of the Church in America; his leadership has inspired an increased vitality within the Greek Orthodox Church in America and reflects his commitment to God and to service in the name of Christ; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly is honored to have such an eminent churchman as Archbishop Demetrios visit Nashville and the State of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that this General Assembly, on behalf of the citizens of Tennessee, hereby extends our most cordial welcome to His Eminence, Archbishop Demetrios of America, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church in America and Exarch of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, on the occasion of his attendance of the Clergy-Laity Conference of the Metropolis of Detroit the week of June 19, 2003.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we also offer our best wishes for a fruitful and rewarding conference, and express our profound hope that His Eminence will return often for visits in the future.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.

